

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 208371

FOR ENDERS FROM ARMITAGE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, OVIP (POPOV, IVAN), BU

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH BULGARIAN DEPUTY PREMIER POPOV

1. YOU HAVE AGREED TO PARTICIPATE IN A 45-MINUTE ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION OF US-BULGARIAN BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH BULGARIAN DEPUTY PREMIER POPOV AND MEMBERS OF HIS DELEGATION ON SEPTEMBER 23. THIS MESSAGE SETS OUT THE FRAMEWORK FOR THAT MEETING.
2. WE ANTICIPATE THAT POPOV WILL BE SENSITIVE TO PROTOCOL ASPECTS OF HIS VISIT. AS BULGARIA'S HIGHEST RANKING GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL SINCE WAR TO VISIT US AND MEMBER OF POLITBURO, HE IS EXPECTING TOP-LEVEL TREATMENT. HE HAS, FOR EXAMPLE, ASKED TO SEE THE PRESIDENT TO DELIVER A MESSAGE FROM CHAIRMAN ZHIVKOV, AND WE DO NOT YET HAVE A REPLY TO THAT REQUEST. HE WANTED TO SEE THE SECRETARY, BUT BOTH HE AND ART HARTMAN WILL BE IN NEW YORK. HOWEVER, HIS HALF-HOUR MEETING WITH THE DEPUTY SECRETARY, WHICH THE COUNSELOR WILL ALSO ATTEND, AND THE ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSION BRING TOGETHER THE HIGHEST LEVEL DEPARTMENT OFFICERS AVAILABLE FOR THE TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED.
3. FOR REASONS OF SUBSTANCE AS WELL AS PROTOCOL, WE WOULD

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LIKE YOU TO CHAIR THE ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSION, IN WHICH

GRANGER (SCI), HITCHCOCK (CU) AND ARMITAGE (EUR) WILL PARTICIPATE. SINCE TIME IS LIMITED AND POPOV NEEDS AN

INTERPRETER, WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE BEST TO GIVE POPOV AN OPPORTUNITY TO SAY WHAT IS ON HIS MIND, WHICH LIKELY WILL BE LARGELY ECONOMIC, I.E. MFN PROSPECTS, EXIMBANK FINANCING, BULGARIAN GOALS FOR THEIR FIVE-YEAR PLAN 1976-1980, AND THEIR INTEREST IN PURCHASING INDUSTRIAL EQUIPMENT. POPOV MAY ALSO RAISE THE QUESTION OF NEGOTIATING BILATERAL COOPERATION AGREEMENTS ON AGRICULTURE, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, CULTURAL AFFAIRS, NAVIGATION AND CIVIL AVIATION. UNDER NSDM 212, WE WOULD NOT MOVE AHEAD ON THIS TYPE OF AGREEMENT FOR SOME INDEFINITE TIME TO COME.

4. FOLLOWING IS TAKEN FROM ISSUES/TALKING POINTS PAPER FOR THE DEPUTY SECRETARY WHICH GIVES FLAVOR OF MAINTAINING AS POLITE AND POSITIVE A TONE AS IS POSSIBLE CONSISTENT WITH UNSPECIFIC OR RATHER NEGATIVE REPLIES ON SUBSTANCE.

5. QUOTE: AS WE WANT TO CONVEY OUR ANTICIPATION THAT OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH BULGARIA WILL CONTINUE TO IMPROVE BUT AS WE ARE NOT IN A POSITION TO RESPOND IN A SPECIFICALLY POSITIVE MANNER TO THE BULGARIANS' PRIMARY CONCERNS, IT IS PROBABLY BEST TO HEAR POPOV OUT ON HIS VIEW OF THE PROSPECTIVE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR RELATIONS AND MAKE YOUR RESPONSE IN GENERAL TERMS INSTEAD OF ADDRESSING THE VARIOUS ISSUES MORE SPECIFICALLY.

6. -- WE WELCOME POPOV ON THE FIRST VISIT OF A LEADING BULGARIAN OFFICIAL TO THE UNITED STATES SINCE WORLD WAR II. WE ARE SURE THAT PRESIDENT FORD WILL BE GLAD TO RECEIVE THE MESSAGE WHICH POPOV BEARS FROM BULGARIAN PRESIDENT ZHIVKOV. (WE ARE ASSUMING POPOV WILL HAND IT TO YOU.)

7. -- WE ARE PLEASED THAT AFTER A LONG PERIOD OF DIFFICULT RELATIONS WE CAN NOW SEE THE BEGINNINGS OF THE PROCESS OF MOVING OUR RELATIONS TOWARD NORMALIZATION AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO THE CONTINUATION OF THAT PROCESS IN ALL ASPECTS, INCLUDING OUR POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP.

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8. -- WE HAVE BEEN CONCENTRATING OUR ATTENTION ON OBTAINING THE PASSAGE OF A TRADE REFORM BILL WHICH CONTAINS CONGRESSIONAL AUTHORIZATION TO NEGOTIATE MOST FAVORED NATION TREATMENT AND AFFECTS CREDITS WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND SEVERAL EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, INCLUDING BULGARIA. THERE HAVE BEEN SOME SUBSTANTIAL DIFFICULTIES IN THIS REGARD, AS POPOV IS AWARE, BUT WE ARE HOPEFUL THAT THE LEGISLATION WILL PASS THE CONGRESS

THIS CURRENT SESSION WHICH TERMINATES SOMETIME NEXT MONTH.

9. -- THERE IS A SUBSTANTIAL BACKLOG OF BUSINESS WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WHICH HAS

ACCUMULATED AS WE WORKED FOR THIS KEY AUTHORIZING LEGISLATION -- INCLUDING THE MATTERS WHICH POPOV HAS RAISED AFFECTING BULGARIA. AS HE KNOWS, FOR EXAMPLE, WE HAVE LONGSTANDING COMMITMENTS TO NEGOTIATE OR ACCORD MOST FAVORED NATION TREATMENT TO THE SOVIET UNION AND ROMANIA AND THIS WILL, OF COURSE, BE OUR FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS.

10. -- WE WILL THEN BE ABLE TO TURN OUR ATTENTION TO THE AGENDA OF UNFINISHED BUSINESS WITH OTHER EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, INCLUDING BULGARIA AND THE TOPICS WHICH POPOV HAS RAISED.

11. -- WE UNDERSTAND THE INTEREST OF BULGARIA IN MFN AND CREDITS. THESE ARE IMPORTANT ELEMENTS IN THE EXPANSION OF OUR TRADE AND WE WILL WANT TO DISCUSS THEM WITH BULGARIA IN DUE COURSE AS OUR OVERALL RELATIONSHIP IMPROVES.

12. -- THERE ARE EXTENSIVE POSSIBILITIES FOR THE EXPANSION OF TRADE IN THE MEANTIME AND WE ARE PLEASED THAT POPOV HAS COME TO EXPLORE THEM. WE NOTE THAT HE WILL BE HAVING EXTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS IN WASHINGTON WITH KEY OFFICIALS CONCERNED AND THAT HE HAS A LONG AND BUSY SCHEDULE OF CONFERENCES WITH AMERICAN BUSINESS CIRCLES. THIS IS PROBABLY MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE OFFICIAL CONVERSATIONS AS BUSINESSMEN ARE THE ONES WHO DO THE BUSINESS IN THE UNITED STATES.

13. -- WE ALSO NOTE THAT POPOV IS PLANNING TO HOLD CON-
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VERSATIONS WITH THE FOREIGN BONDHOLDERS COUNCIL AND ARE PLEASED THAT THERE IS THE PROSPECT OF GETTING THIS PROBLEM OUT OF THE WAY. (TO BE CONFIRMED)

14. -- WE WISH HIM GOOD CONTACTS AND SUCCESS AS HE TOURS THE COUNTRY AND LOOK FORWARD TO THE CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT OF OUR RELATIONS IN ALL ASPECTS. WE HAVE ATTACHED PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE TO THE RESOLUTION OF THE ISSUES OF FREEDOM MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE AND IDEAS IN THE BASKET THREE AT CSCE AND IN OUR RELATIONS WITH THE EASTERN COUNTRIES. WE HAVE FOLLOWED THE QUESTION OF DIVIDED FAMILIES CLOSELY AND UNDERSTAND THAT SOME EXIT PERMITS HAVE BEEN ISSUED RECENTLY AND THAT IT HAS BEEN INDICATED THAT OTHERS ARE TO FOLLOW. THIS IS AN ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENT AND ONE WHICH WE HOPE WILL CONTINUE. END QUOTE. KISSINGER

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